

M I C H I G A N Agriculture News

STATE SENATOR 16th District

Cameron S. Brown



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Dear Friend:

As the auto and manufacturing industries struggle, agriculture has kept Michigan's economic motor running. It's our state's second largest industry, accounting for nearly \$64 billion in economic activity last year and growing.

Here at home, agriculture is an important part of the economic vitality and rural quality of life in the 16th District. I am writing to update you on some of our legislative work to support our farmers and the rest of the agricultural community.

If there is any way I may be of assistance to you, please do not hesitate to contact me toll-free at 866.305.0316 or by e-mail at sencbrown@senate.michigan.gov. Best wishes for a productive and prosperous 2008!

Sincerely,

Cameron S. Brown
State Senator
16th District

TOP 5 — 2006 MICHIGAN AGRICULTURAL COMMODITIES

Dairy products:	\$936.3 million
Floriculture and Nursery:	\$642.4 million
Corn:	\$552.8 million
Soybeans:	\$453.9 million
Cattle and calves:	\$294.6 million
All commodities:	\$4.5 billion

SENATOR BROWN SUPPORTS BILLS TO PUT MAEAP REQUIREMENTS INTO LAW

There are about 200 concentrated animal feeding operations (CAFOs) in Michigan. The Senate has approved legislation to help large livestock producers protect the environment and remain economically competitive.

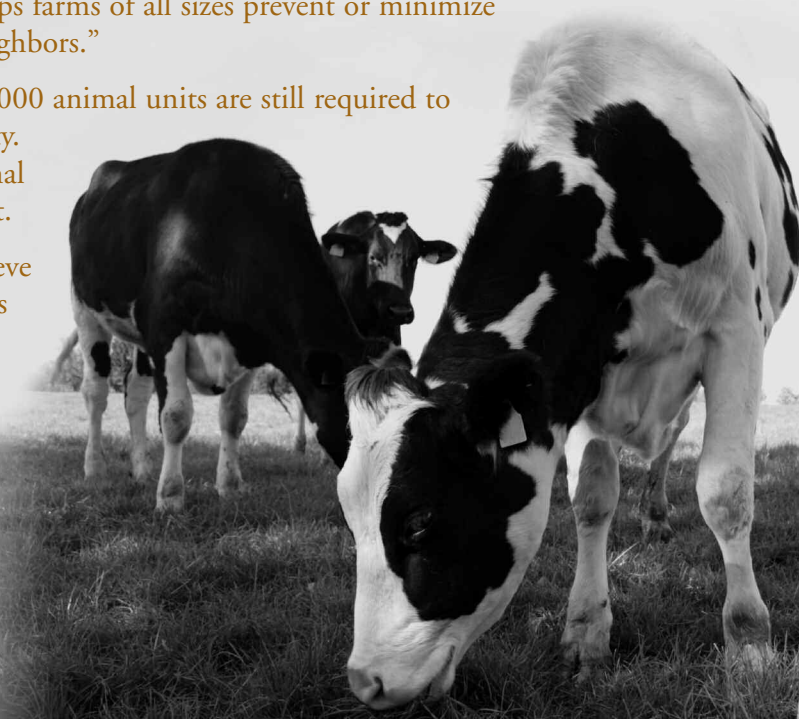
Senate Bills 501 and 503-504 strengthen the Michigan Agriculture Environmental Assurance Program (MAEAP) and put its requirements into law. The MAEAP strategy helps farms of all sizes prevent or minimize pollution risks, and show the public that they are "good neighbors."

Under the legislation, large animal farms with more than 5,000 animal units are still required to get a permit from the Department of Environmental Quality. However, livestock operations between 1,000 to 5,000 animal units can either become MAEAP-verified or obtain a permit.

Unlike the current administration, my colleagues and I believe that Michigan farms can meet high environmental standards without costly and unnecessary state regulation that is more stringent than federal requirements.

Most farmers are good environmental stewards. They know it's important to take care of their land and water resources. For those few bad actors, other bills in the package greatly increase the penalties for polluters.

The legislation has been sent to the House for consideration.



New Law Protects FARMERS

Trespassers can damage crops and livestock.

I supported legislation to help farmers protect their property and investments.

Senate legislation now signed into law helps farmers better protect their property and livelihood from trespassers. Public Act 167 of 2007 (Senate Bill 540) prohibits people from entering a farmer's property without the owner's consent. Posted or fenced-in property is considered a sufficient enough warning to keep people out.

Violators are subject to a misdemeanor charge.

SENATOR BROWN SUPPORTS STRICTER OVERSIGHT OF PESTICIDE SALES

A new law levels the playing field for Michigan agricultural pesticide dealers. Public Act 18 of 2008 (Senate Bill 682) requires out-of-state vendors to obtain a license and maintain a registered office and a registered agent in the state.

The law requires the licensed dealer to report sales to the pesticide registrant to make sure all firms are paying the state's water protection fee. In addition, the increased oversight allows the state to better track the sale of agricultural pesticides.

PESTICIDE

BOVINE TB DISCOVERY REQUIRES VIGILANCE

Earlier this winter, a deer taken by a hunter in Shiawassee County tested positive for bovine Tuberculosis (TB), more than 100 miles south of the northern Lower Michigan bovine TB zone.

The Department of Agriculture has designated a 10-mile radius around the site as a Potential High Risk Area. Cattle herds in the area are being tested this spring for the disease.

Since eradication efforts began in 1995, all of the state's one million cattle have been tested for bovine TB. To date, all cattle outside the bovine TB zone have been free of the disease. Hopefully, this is an isolated incident and the bovine TB-free trend continues.

The cattle industry contributes significantly to the Michigan economy each year.

Stay on top of this issue at www.michigan.gov/emergingdiseases.



Michigan CONSERVATION Week

Highlights Land Conservation

Spring not only heralds the start of planting season, but the arrival of Michigan Conservation Week! This year's event, held April 20 through 26, focused on land conservation and the work of our land conservancies.

The week-long celebration highlighted new legislation and honored local conservancy groups in their mission to protect natural assets in our communities. Many family farmers have looked to local land trusts to help protect the land they love and ensure future generations can work and enjoy it.

Last year's inaugural event saluted Michigan's hunting and fishing heritage.



SENATOR BROWN SUPPORTS NEW LAW TO ENHANCE FOOD SAFETY

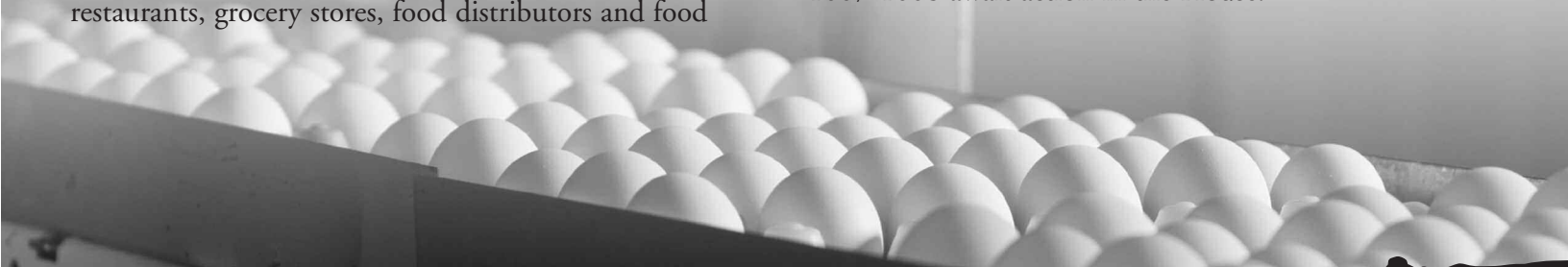
The updated Michigan Food Law puts more teeth in food safety protection and provides long-awaited uniform industry regulations.

Public Acts 113-114 of 2007 (Senate Bill 595, House Bill 4956) adopt the 2005 version of the federal food code and change the system of inspection to one focused on controlling risk factors to prevent food-borne illnesses. The law requires that food establishments, including restaurants, grocery stores, food distributors and food

processing plants, have at least one managerial employee who is formally trained in food safety and sanitation.

For more information, including food law updates and fact sheets, visit www.michigan.gov/mda. Click on Food Safety on the right sidebar.

In a related matter, the Senate passed legislation earlier this year to update the state's dairy laws. Senate Bills 1007-1008 await action in the House.





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Copper Theft is a Growing Concern

Farmers in the 16th Senate district have been hit hard by the theft of copper, a component in irrigation systems. This larceny has cost farmers thousands of dollars and disrupted their operations.

After talking to numerous farmers and local law enforcement in my Senate district, I introduced legislation to help prevent the theft of copper wire and other valuable metals.

Senate Bill 888 would help curb the sale of stolen metals at secondhand and junk dealers. This new measure would strengthen existing law by requiring the seller to show photo identification upon sale of scrap items. The photo I.D. would then be copied and maintained by the scrap dealer. Senate Bills 1113 and 1114 would impose the same requirements on scrap processors, automotive recyclers, or junkyards that deal primarily in industrial scrap and are not required to maintain records on those who sell scrap metal to their facilities.

The U.S. Department of Energy estimates that businesses nationwide have lost around \$1 billion from copper wire thefts that have disrupted electricity and slowed construction projects, as well as broken irrigation systems. The thefts can also compromise emergency services as 9-1-1 service is carried on copper wires.

Resources for Agriculture

Michigan Department of Agriculture
www.michigan.gov/mda

U.S. Department of Agriculture
www.usda.gov

Agricultural Statistics Service
www.nass.usda.gov/mi

USDA Rural Development
www.rurdev.usda.gov/mi/
Phone: 800-944-8119

Farm Service Agency
www.fsa.usda.gov

MSU Extension
www.msue.msu.edu

MSU Product Center
(Commercialization Assistance)
www.productcenter.msu.edu
phone: 517-432-8750

MSU Agriculture Weather Office
www.agweather.geo.msu.edu

Emerald Ash Borer
www.michigan.gov/eab
Phone: 866-325-0023

West Nile Virus
www.michigan.gov/emergingdiseases
Phone: 888-668-0869

Bovine Tuberculosis
www.michigan.gov/emergingdiseases
Phone: 517-373-1077

